

God love you....and has a wonderful plan for your life.

It is true that God loves you, but you decide if His plan is “wonderful.” If you have heard that happiness comes through Jesus Christ, you may like to think again. The first thing Jesus said of the Apostle Paul (who wrote most of the New Testament) was that he would show him “how great things he must suffer for (His) name’s sake.” In Acts 9:16 three times Paul was beaten with rods, once he was stoned, three times he suffered shipwreck, a night and a day he spent in the sea. There were times when Paul was so unhappy, he wanted to die. (2 Cor. 1:8). The Bible says, “All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. (2 Tim 3:12). It says we enter the Kingdom of God through much distress (Acts 14:22) and that we were appointed afflictions (1Thes. 3:3). Jesus said if we followed Him we would be reviled, persecuted, hated, and all manner of evil would be said against us falsely, for His sake. He warned that we would have to take up our cross daily, deny ourselves and follow Him, saying “In the world you shall have tribulation,” and even that we may be called to die for our faith (Matthew 24:9).

There once was a young man who had believed alluring television advertisements and joined the navy to see the world; and what did he see? He saw the sea... and found nothing but hard work. Now he couldn’t wait to leave the navy. If they had been honest in their advertising, the navy may not have got as many recruits, but at least the ones they did get would be committed, rather than deserters at heart.

I have told you the truth about Christianity. Oh...I forgot to mention one thing – along with the trials comes “the gift of God”... everlasting life (Romans 6:23)! The Apostle Paul lost everything for the sake of his faith, and said that compared to what he had found in Jesus Christ, all the riches of this world were nothing but “dung” (Phil. 3:8). All of this doesn’t sound so “wonderful” does it? But without Christ we have nothing! God doesn’t promise us to have a “wonderful” life but rather a full life. Did Paul have a full life? He sure did, but not all full of fun. We need to come to the Savior not for love, joy, peace or lasting happiness but rather because we have transgressed His law. We broke the Law and Jesus paid the fine for us.

The Problem with Modern Evangelism

Many Christians obtain “Decisions” by using the following method:

“Do you know that you are going to heaven when you die?”

Most will say, “I hope so.”

The Christian then says, “You can know so. The Bible says, ‘All have sinned.’ Jesus died on the cross for our sins, and if you give your heart to Him today, you can know for sure that you are going to heaven. Would you like to have that assurance that you will go to heaven when you die?”

He/she will almost always say, “Yes.”

The person is then led in what is commonly called a “sinner’s prayer.”

There are a few difficulties with the popular approach:

- 1) There is NO mention of Judgment day – the very reason men are commanded to repent;
- 2) There is No mention of Hell;
- 3) The Law isn’t used to bring the knowledge of sin. The apostle Paul said that the law was the only means by which he came to know what sin was (Romans 7:7)

The modern approach may get a decision or gain a church member, but if there is NO Biblical Repentance, there will be a false conversion. Don’t be tempted to measure evangelist “success” by the number of “decisions” obtained. We tend to rejoice over decisions, when heaven reserves its rejoicing for repentance – “There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents” (Luke 15:10). It is easy to get “decisions for Jesus” using the modern method of well-chosen words and psychological manipulation. Rather, see success as having the opportunity to sow the seed of God’s Word into the hearts of your hearers. If you faithfully sow, someone else will reap. If you have the privilege of reaping, then someone has faithfully sown before you. One sows, another reaps, but it is God who gives the increase (see 1 Cor. 3:6-7)